

May 16, 2016, BLT Agenda Item Comments

Comments on the Newport Beach Board of Library Trustees (BLT) agenda items submitted by:
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Item 1. Minutes of the April 18, 2016 Board of Library Trustees Meeting

Page 1: under "II. ROLL CALL": "Trustees ~~Absence~~ Absent."

Page 1: under "IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS": "Jim Mosher commented that this Agenda Item #4 can be interpreted two ways; the public can comment on all items only now, or it's an announcement the public can only comment on items that as they are presented to the Board is presenting."

Page 2: before "VI. CURRENT BUSINESS" (vote on Consent Calendar): "**ABSTENTION:** Ray" (I would assume the abstention was on the minutes, only?)

Page 2: sentence 2 from end: "The new design will include furniture that will be easily accessible, instead of being grounded to the floor." (? should this be "movable" or "reconfigurable" rather than "accessible"? or both?)

Page 3: paragraph 2: "Discussed Discussion ensued regarding the seating area for children and adults ..."

Page 4: paragraph 3: "Ms. Mielke will be participating with the Santiago Library Services System (SLS) on a group project, ..." [?]

Page 4: paragraph 2 before Item 8: "It was suggested by Board Member Grant to request the Historical Committee Society look into this further." [?]

Page 4: line 1 under Item 8: "Staff requested the Board of Library Trustee Trustees review a proposed survey ..."

Page 5: paragraph 2, last sentence: "She believes staff will have a better response from subscribers if sent electronic electronically, and will alleviate the cost of stamps."

Page 5: paragraph 2 under Item 9: "Library Services Director Hetherton announced that the Library Services Manager is leaving Library Services to pursue other career opportunities." [why not say, or add: "to accept appointment as Director of the City of Orange Public Library"?]

Page 5: paragraph 3 under Item 9: "Library Services Manager David Curtis reported that joining Genie CENIC is an opportunity for the Library to join forces with other out of state city IT groups in order to have faster internet connection." [I believe CENIC -- Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California -- is a state-wide, but not an out-of-state project]

Page 6: paragraph 2 under Item 12: "Vice Chair Prichard reported that the Committee had a strong season and the Committee is very enthusiast enthusiastic and effective in how they work together."

Page 6: paragraph 2 under Item VIII: “*Jim Mosher inquired if the ~~Scenic~~ CENIC program is only for faster internet speed ...*”

Item 4. Expenditure Status Report

If the notation “As of 5/1/16” is correct (that is, with two months left in the fiscal year), one would expect continuing items to be 10/12ths through their budgets. Salary and benefit expenditures appear to be about \$70,000 below that level, while maintenance and operations seems to be \$60,000 under. The Board may wish to know what staff’s projections are for how those categories will end the year and if unspent money will revert to the general fund (losing its commitment to the library).

The Trustees may wish to review the City Manager’s proposed budget for the coming fiscal year (FY2016-17), which I believe will be the subject of a City Council [study session](#) on May 24th. Two of the three parts (which can be found on the City website under [City Salary & Budget Documents](#)) have been released so far: the [Capital Improvement Program](#) budget (which includes, on page 16 of the [PDF](#), a \$6,990,375 allocation for the Corona del Mar Library-Fire Station, of which \$1,144,900 is new) and the [Budget Detail](#) (which has the library budget allocations primarily on pages 245-278 [= 287-320 in the [PDF](#) version], but with some revenues and expenses summarized elsewhere, such as pages E1 and E3 [=27 & 29 of PDF]). The budget detail includes its own projections for how the actual expenditures on the various line items will end the year. From page E1, the recommended library *expenses* of \$7,742,288 for FY2016-17 (2.83% of the City’s total operating budget) are 4.29% less than for the coming year, presumably primarily because it doesn’t include the expected donations from the Friends and Foundation. Library *revenues* for FY2016-17 (page R4 = 12 of the PDF) are expected to include \$145,000 from fines, but, oddly (in view of Item 7, below) nothing from “Library Facilities Fees.”

The Board may wish to check that the City Manager’s recommendation coincides with their own, and also how the projected expenditure of \$8,089,270 for FY2015-16 (on page E1 of the *Budget Detail*) relates to the Revised Budget of \$7,418,275 stated in the present *Expenditure Status Report* (note: the new budget software does not seem to be reporting department-wide totals at the end of Division reports in the published the *Budget Detail*).

The Board may also wish to be aware that until recently the City Charter required the City Manager to meet with the City’s boards and commissions to ensure they had adequate funding for their own operations in the coming year. Although that requirement was eliminated as part of a large package of charter amendments presented to voters a few years ago, within the past year Trustees discussed embarking on some Board activities that might require additional funding, such as exploring the possibility of expanding the Central Library with a larger auditorium. They may wish to request funding for that be set aside (or perhaps the Friends or Foundation wish list would be a more appropriate source?).

Looking to the future, the “*Five Year Look Ahead*” on page 119 of the PDF version of the CIP predicts the Fire Station No. 1 / Balboa Library Replacement will happen in FY 2019-20 at a cost of \$6,100,000.

Item 5. Board of Library Trustees Monitoring List

I see the budget discussion suggested above is scheduled for the June 20, 2016, meeting. That would seem rather late to affect the coming year's budget.

Item 6. NBPL Foundation Update

Seem Item 9, below. Although not necessarily directly related to a presentation about the Donor Wall, do the Foundation's room naming activities carry with them any implications or restrictions on future use of the named areas or the longevity of the naming? For example, can a reading room dedicated to a particular donor be turned into something else, and if so, what happens to the former designation?

One thinks of the [\\$15 million](#) reportedly paid to the Fisher heirs so the right to rename [Avery Fisher Hall](#) (originally "Philharmonic Hall") at Lincoln Center could be sold to a higher bidder.

Item 7. Library Meeting Room Fee Update

The City's policies and charges for use of public facilities are largely incomprehensible.

That is especially so for the library facilities, since, as noted under Item 4, above, the *Budget Detail* (page R4) shows no revenue from Library Facilities Fees in recent years and only nominal amounts in earlier years (\$776 in 2012-13 and 2014-15, \$2,131 in 2013-14) compared to \$60,000 from rental of the Civic Center Community Room, \$50,000 from OASIS Facility Fees and \$558,000 from other City Facility Fees.

The most recent Master [Fee Schedule](#) adopted by City Council [Resolution 2015-76](#) seems to be only part of the fee schedule, and does not appear to include any charges relate to the library.

What the City believes to be the current library fee schedule seems to start on [page 13](#) of the 27 page version of the current [Newport Beach Schedule of Rents, Penalties, and Fees](#) and includes only a list of charges for what it calls the "Central Library Community Room" (= Friends Room).

As with the rental charges administered by the Recreation and Senior Services Department, there is no authority I'm aware of for the four tiers of charges for Non-Profit Resident Rate, Non-Profit Nonresident Rate, Private Resident Rate and Private Nonresident Rate. In fact, by ordinance (NBMC [Sec. 3.36.030](#)) all users are supposed to be charged 1% of the actual cost of providing the use (compared to 50% cost recovery for facilities rented by R&SS, except for 45% for OASIS rooms). This is not mentioned in the present staff report, and I have no idea where the 1% comes from, or if it was used to arrive at the proposed charges.

In addition to the changes recommended in the staff report, [Policy I-7](#) would seem very much in need of review and revision. It contemplates charging for use of the Central Library Conference Room (in which the BLT meets) as well as the Friends Room, and sets hours and restrictions on use of the rooms that do not seem to coincide with the current reality. For example, the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce's use of the Friends Room for [Wake Up! Newport](#) would

appear to be by a group that is not a 501(c)3 and before 9:15 a.m. – both things seemingly disallowed by Policy I-7. And since Policy I-7 was last revised, the expansion of the Central Library added a meeting room in a public area not covered by the policy (the staff conference room adjacent to the Media Lab) and the contemplated rebuilding of the Corona del Mar Branch (and possibly the Balboa Branch) will create configurable community spaces for which policy has not yet been set. Finally, the construction of a City Hall adjacent to the Central Library, with many meeting rooms which oddly don't seem available for rent, might impact the original rationale for burdening library staff with providing meeting space in that area.

Item 8. NBPL Friends of the Library Wish List for Fiscal Year 2016/2017

I am a little puzzled by the requested gift from the Friends to support the Literacy Program.

While literacy is unquestionably a core library function, I thought the Literacy Program had its own support group. Shouldn't the fundraising be coming from it and gifts specifically designated for it?

Item 9. NBPL Foundation Wish List for Fiscal Year 2016/2017

I don't recall the Board ever talking about "repurposing" the Charles Sword Reading Room at the southeast corner of the upper floor of the Central Library (shown on this possibly [orphaned page](#) on the library's website).

Was there a donation involved, and any restrictions on its future use?

Is it intended as a new meeting room (like the Conference Room and Staff Room by the Media Lab) or as a new group study room? If the latter, it seems isolated from the others.

If repurposing is allowed and an additional study room desired, might it be better to move the Local History collection to the Sword Room, and repurpose the former as a study room?

This also raises the question of whether the corresponding room on the ground floor (originally the Stahr Storytime Room), in the children's area has been or will also be repurposed since there is now a much larger storytime area?